



REAFFIRMING OUR ONA COVENANT

2018 PROGRAM CALENDAR

Sunday Series

September 23

- *After worship*, join us for an exploration of **Our ONA Story** hosted by Valerie Jackson, Member in Discernment, with personal reflections by Sheila Merrell, Council Moderator 2004-2005. The session will include viewing of a short PBS video featuring three stories of ONA discernment by UCC churches.

September 30

- *During worship*, we welcome Rev. Tyler Connoley to our pulpit preaching on **The Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:27-39)**, a story of expansive welcome in the early church. Rev. Connoley, the Minister of Search & Call Discernment for the UCC's Missouri Mid-South Conference, is a biblical theologian and storyteller and a leader of Gateway ONA.
- *After worship*, the ONA team will present the results of our **4-Part Listening Process** designed to better understand our current ONA work and to explore future directions. The listening process has included a physical church audit, Council self-evaluation, churchwide survey, and LGBTQ+ focus group.

October 14

- *After worship*, we will explore **Bullying and the LGBTQ Teen** with Dr. Jeff Rothweiler, an adolescent and child psychologist at St. Louis Children's Hospital. We will include information on support resources in our community and ways to get involved.

October 21

- *After worship*, Jaimie Hileman will help us explore **Transgender Basics** with an introduction to gender identity, gender expectations, and gender expression. We will gain an understanding of basic cultural competency and terminology. Ms. Hileman teaches on this topic at Washington University and has provided training and support to numerous congregations, synagogues, and mosques.

November 4

- *Before worship*, we welcome Rev. Dr. John M. Bracke to present **The Bible and Homosexuality: Examining the So-Called Clobber Texts**, those bible passages most commonly used to argue that homosexuality is a sin. Rev. Bracke taught Old Testament and Congregational leadership at Eden Theological Seminary for 28 years before

Sacred Studies & Fellowship

Tuesdays 10:00am-11:30am
October 2 – November 6

Hearts Unbound

In six entertaining, thought-provoking, and participatory sessions, engage biblical texts of God's radical love and welcome.

Led by Valerie Jackson

retiring in 2012. He is currently a member of the Conference Council of the UCC Missouri Midsouth Conference.

November 11

- *During worship*, we welcome our own **Paul Evensen**, PhD, to the pulpit to share his personal reflections.
- *After worship*, the ONA team invites your input in **Updating Our ONA Covenant**. New UCC guidelines and examples from other ONA churches will be explored.

December 2 – First Sunday of Advent, symbolizing Hope

- *After worship*, stop by the **ONA Signature Stole** table at the Advent Workshop and add your name to the First Church stole. This stole will become part of the permanent collection of the Shower of Stoles Project.

December 16 – Third Sunday of Advent, symbolizing Love

- *During worship*, we will be **Celebrating Our ONA Covenant**. Join us for a special worship service followed by Coffee and Community.

<p>Keep your eyes open for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Show of Stoles exhibit, from a collection of over 1,000 liturgical stoles and other sacred items representing the lives of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people of faith. For more information, visit www.welcomingresources.org/sosp➤ Setting Priorities for ONA Affirmation and Solidarity, extending FCC's ONA roadmap	
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Sunday Series Details: Visitors Welcome!

- *Before worship* sessions are from 9:00am-10:00am and will include coffee and light breakfast
- *Worship* begins at 10:30am
- *After worship* sessions will start between 11:45am and noon and will include light lunch

About This Program: In 2005, First Congregational Church St. Louis committed to welcome and affirm our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer members and friends. In the United Church of Christ, this is known as being Open & Affirming, or “ONA” for short. This new program is designed to update members and visitors on the status of ONA ministry and continued challenges in the church and in our culture, and to equip us for our continued work in and outside of church. **ONA Program Team:** Paul Evensen, Jim Goodwin, Valerie Jackson, Ann Kittlaus

Feedback, Ideas, Questions:

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Location and information:

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